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ABSTRACT

This publication reports on a gathering of 42 postgraduate foreign students from 27 nations studying at institutions of higher education in Britain to discuss the foreign student experience. Three main issues dominated the conference: (1) the relationship of overseas students to the British people; (2) students' life and work at the university; and (3) economic considerations. Bhikhu Parekh reviewed why students come to Britain to study and ongoing problems of racism and economics. Barbara Smith explored the complexities of living with the British, foreign students' busy lives, and Britain as a divided society. Ali argued that conference attenders should become involved in the student movement in order to affect change. Keith Fenwick discussed approaches to study within the British context and some of the problems foreign students experience, those that are similar to native students and those that are particular to the foreign students. Five discussion groups each met twice to consider what advice to give in-coming foreign students and practical changes to make the transition easier. A panel of students discussed what they expected to experience on returning home. In a final talk Alastair Niven reviewed reasons students come to Britain to study and noted problems of academic supervision, the impact of increased fees, decline in the reputation of British education, and decline in democracy. Includes a list of participants, their country, and their institutional affiliation. (JB)

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OVERSEAS STUDENTS IN BRITAIN: A WELCOME EXPERIENCE?

A ST CATHARINE'S CONFERENCE HELD AT CUMBERLAND LODGE SEPTEMBER 1988

ISSN 0955–3517

St Catharine's Conference Report No. 12 published by:
The King George VI and Queen Elizabeth Foundation of St Catharine's,
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Introduction

When the King George VI and Queen Elizabeth Foundation of St Catharine's was first founded, one of its main purposes was to enable students from all kinds of backgrounds to meet and exchange views and ideas to a degree which the daily routine in contemporary universities did and does not permit. This conference of overseas students in Britain aimed at doing just that, bringing together 42 postgraduate students from 27 countries, studying at different institutions of Higher Education in this country.

Several St Catharine's Conferences are held each year; they are generally concerned with a wide range of topical issues of social, moral, economic and political concern and involve a wide variety of people. Recent conferences, for example, have been looking at the media, Commonwealth affairs, and police work.

The Conference was addressed by:—

Professor Bhikhu C. Parekh, Professor of Political Theory at the University of Hull and Deputy Chairman of the Commission for Racial Equality

Barbara Smith, Overseas Student Welfare Officer for the British Council

Ali, former executive member of the National Union of Students and of the UK Council for Overseas Student Affairs

Dr Keith Fenwick, Dean of Students at Christ Church College, Canterbury

Dr Alastair Niven, Literature Director at the Arts Council and former Director-General of the Africa Centre

Rev Robert Hughes, former Student Accommodation and Welfare Officer at Birmingham University, chaired a panel of students.

In his address of welcome, **Tim Slack**, the Principal of the St Catharine's Foundation, expressed his pleasure at seeing such a variety of countries represented and stressed that the intention of the weekend was to draw on students' experiences rather than to undertake a theoretical exploration of issues.

Summary

The experiences and problems of overseas students as presented in the course of the conference were usually concerned with one or more of three main areas, namely:—

- their relationship with British people;
- their life and work at university;
- economic considerations.

The most obvious difficulty of coming to Britain, or indeed any other country, as a foreigner consists in having to reconcile one's own cultural, historical,

and linguistic background with that of the host country. This invariably leads to questions of lifestyle and identity, and responses to these range from rigid preservation of one's traditional identity to complete surrender to the new set of values and forms of behaviour. Most participants felt that it was up to the individual to find the right balance between the original and the foreign identity, which would allow them to adapt to their host country, and yet remain themselves.

However, the process of achieving this ideal is slow, laborious, and very often frustrating. It demands great patience and optimism in the face of intolerance, ignorance, or plain helplessness on the part of British people; it also demands energy and strength in overcoming linguistic problems and sometimes personal shyness. On the other hand it does have the effect of making one reflect on and become more aware of one's own cultural background as well as increasing one's tolerance towards others.

It is up to the individual to find the right balance between the original and the foreign identity.

Coming to Britain in order to do academic and research work obviously brings contact with a particular type of cultural difference, namely the difference in the educational systems. The liberal approach to teaching and supervision typical of the British system, for example, can be extremely confusing for a student raised in a system in which a tutor's word must not be doubted and students' progress is strictly monitored. A student from such an authoritarian background may find it very difficult to structure a research project, seek help in doing so, and to assess its progress without the very close supervision he or she has been accustomed to.

Another aspect of studying in this country is that resources and available material as well as skills are very much orientated towards British practice. Thus there is a danger that it could fail to provide a training which is relevant, particularly to students from developing countries.

The problem of funding featured less prominently in the discussions, but some of the participants were finding it difficult or impossible to complete their courses in the way they had intended because they were running out of money, and clearly there were those students who could not take advantage of the educational facilities on offer in the UK for this reason.

The foreign student in today's world

In the opening address to the conference, **Professor Bhikku Parekh** suggested that for a variety of reasons the number of overseas students coming to the first world is bound to increase. As developing countries are beginning to industrialize they are going to need technology and to acquire skills, and they do this by sending students to the technologically developed countries. But with time they will increase the number of students of social sciences studying abroad, too, because once the initial problem of poverty is beginning to be solved, a country will start to reflect its own identity, history, culture, and social structure, and will therefore have to train scholars for these disciplines, which are relatively new in most third world countries.

A British degree still has considerable appeal.

Another significant factor, and one that is not confined to students from developing countries, is that a foreign diploma or certificate can add to marketability. As competition gets fiercer, and if money is available, people will wish to spend time abroad to extend their education.

To many students Britain remains attractive—partly because a British degree still has considerable appeal due to the colonial connection, because there is confidence in the quality of British higher education, because the English language is still more valuable than French or German, because British society is relatively peaceful, and because the large black community provides useful contacts for Africans and Asians new to the country.

The attraction appears to be fast diminishing though, as fees have gone up. The problem is aggravated by the fact that in Britain students cannot interrupt their courses in order to earn the necessary money or move on from a less expensive institution to a more expensive one, as they can, for example, in the USA. Also, other European countries have recognized the value of offering such training and do so at less cost (in France and Germany there are no fees at all, Belgium exempts undergraduate students from 41 and postgraduate students from 80 countries from fees).

"You want my money, I want your services".

Lastly, the attitude towards overseas students has become crude and insensitive in that their value to this country is now often seen merely in monetary terms, namely as a source of income while they are here and as an investment for the future in educating prospective customers of the British economy.

This narrow view of what overseas students mean to Britain blurs their overall significance for the nation: they bring inspiration and a new dimension to society. It also creates problems for the students themselves; about 12% of overseas students complain about racial discrimination, ranging from harassment in everyday situations to serious disadvantages like finding that suitable accommodation is not available to them. They often feel they are not being valued by the home students and do not have enough contact with them. They feel they are being recognized only for the money they bring to the country and respond to this along the lines of "You want my money, I want your services", an attitude which is obviously detrimental to the atmosphere and quality of work at universities.

Both this crude self-interest and the sentimental attitude which assumes automatically that everyone coming from the third world is deprived are counterproductive. Ideally, self-interest should be modified by moral principles. It is right that both sides should benefit, but it is also right that there should be a special obligation towards countries Britain once ruled over, as they contributed to the development of Britain's industrial economy. Many of the former colonies still depend on Britain for technology, and of course Britain can take advantage of that—"but", as Professor Parekh said, "the point is: is this how a great nation wants to run its affairs?"

The discussion which followed was largely concerned with the participants' own experiences of problems with integration. Some problems arise from the fact that postgraduate students live and work in greater isolation and often under greater financial pressure than undergraduates; an additional difficulty is that British postgraduates are frequently not comparable to their foreign colleagues in terms of age or experience.

Some students also gave examples of cultural differences and of prejudice. One African student was harassed by British (and Chinese) fellow-students refusing to share an office with him as well as a lecturer ignoring responsibility for the progress of his work and denying him comments on a paper the student had delivered. This particular situation was brought to a peaceful end by the belated diplomatic action of the Head of Department, which demonstrates the importance of "sending out appropriate messages by the people who matter".

There is a necessity of being aware of possible misunderstanding.

Another example illustrated how thoughtlessly British people may act at times - one student from a former British colony remembered a lecturer calling a whole group of international students "uncivilized", a word evoking a variety of traumatic associations in the minds of people whose forbears had been colonized in the name of civilization.

Other experiences pointed to the necessity of being aware of possible misunderstanding in non-verbal communication and forms of behaviour: in Britain shaking one's head means disagreement, in Guinea it expresses sympathy; in Britain people shake hands only when they are introduced, in some African countries they do so every time they meet; in Britain you don't insist once an offer has been declined, in Guinea you do.

In the next session, two speakers gave short accounts on how overseas students live in Britain.

The British?

Having intended to talk on "Living with the British", **Barbara Smith** began to wonder "just who are those British?"—a question closely connected with the one of "Do you want to get to know your host community?" According to a study the American Otto Kleinberg undertook in several countries, students generally answer to that in the affirmative. Many overseas students adopt a lifestyle, however, which makes it very difficult for them to get to know their hosts because they lead what might be called a "tramline existence", i.e. a life that repeats the same routine of travelling/working/eating/sleeping every day without finding the opportunity to get involved with the host country's habits and lifestyle.

British people and foreigners have to get to know each other on an individual basis.

Understanding the British is, however, more difficult than it might at first seem because British society is in many respects a divided one. For example, Ralf Dahrendorf's (former Director of the London School of Economics) comment that "I

have a feeling that Britain is uninhabitable, and therefore the people have tried to make it habitable by being reasonable to each other", seems to hold true for "liberal white middle-class people only", and even then only with many reservations. In the same vein, various attempts at classifying overseas students are doomed to failure. The only solution is that British people and foreigners have to get to know each other on an individual basis in order to establish communication and to overcome racial prejudice. In moments of fatigue it is difficult to maintain an open and flexible approach and an optimistic view, and both parties concerned may feel that the other should adjust more. But it does take a joint effort—as Barbara Smith said, "We British need to develop our willingness to listen to you", yet "We have to share the responsibility of this partnership together."

A better life

In his talk on "building a life in Britain" **Ali** avoided dwelling on the issues which he felt were familiar to everyone in the audience, like the discrepancy between expectations and reality, language problems, problems of adjusting to the educational system, problems of establishing oneself as a person in a foreign country, racism and intolerance.

> *Change the situation by getting involved in the student movement.*

Instead, he pleaded for everyone to become active in a way that would change both the general situation and the whole academic environment by getting involved in the student movement. There are many fields in which the student movement could improve its work for overseas students, not only by providing better services for them once they are in Britain, but also by doing something about promotion events for British higher education held in their home countries, which are "sometimes not very honest".

The next NUS conference is to take place in December 1988, and will see the first debate on overseas students in seven years. Furthermore, a national union of overseas students is going to be set up to bring together different groupings and organizations working in that area throughout the country. For this to work it will be necessary for as many people as possible to join in and use their own experience towards improving the situation for students in years to come.

> *"How can I enjoy life in Britain without a big change in my traditional lifestyle?"*

The discussion that followed concentrated on participants' personal experiences of integration and self-preservation. The question of "How can I enjoy life in Britain without a big change in my traditional lifestyle?" was raised. The general feeling on this point seemed to be that trying to adjust to the British way of life completely does not help integration, as one can never become "completely British" and be accepted as such, and it will create identity problems and indeed problems of adjustment on one's return home. It is, however, necessary to overcome one's shyness and to take the first step in seeking contact with individual British people, asserting oneself rather than waiting for them to make the first move. Approaching people on a one-to-one basis will not only make it easier to overcome cultural differences, but also help to dispel the notion that one is faced by an undifferentiated "mass" of people. In order to understand British characteristics and lifestyle and then develop a lifestyle of one's own which is appropriately adjusted to this, one has to mix with British people as much as possible.

While it is important to retain one's own cultural identity, it may become necessary to readjust one's standards. An example of this is the bewilderment which the European nuclear family causes to students coming from cultures in which the extended family plays a key rôle in every individual's life. "At home one would not have mingled with someone who did not have very strong feelings about his family", one student said, but as in this country it is not unusual for people to live away from their families, obviously it cannot have the same significance as it would at home.

Approaches to study

Many of the problems mentioned in the course of the weekend are common to all students new to our higher education institutions, irrespective of their national backgrounds, according to the experience of **Dr Keith Fenwick**. Indeed, overseas students are "experiencing some difficulties in learning which may be identical with those of home students, some of which may be similar in kind but different in degree, and yet others which are a straightforward consequence of studying in a foreign land". Not all overseas students experience the same difficulties; there are varying degrees of strangeness depending on whether a student comes from a European

country, a Commonwealth country, or from elsewhere.

There is often a discrepancy between expectations and reality.

Many of the problems stem from the discrepancy between expectations and reality. Students coming here expect to study alongside British students, but may find themselves in an academic ghetto. They come for an intellectual challenge, but may find themselves relegated (initially at least) to levels of study they had mastered before. They may come to Britain for the study of an international discipline and find that it is very much orientated towards British culture.

The problem that is most often recognized is that of language. Probably used to reading English, students now have to cope with listening to speakers with different accents, mannerisms and so on. Doubts arise—have I failed to understand, or failed to understand the language, or is the speaker simply incomprehensible?

A slightly different aspect of the language problem is that of writing English, which is particularly important for research students. Apart from difficulties of expression, there may be cultural differences in the ways in which sequences of argument are normally presented.

The British approach to teaching can create problems.

Frequently students find it difficult to adjust to the British approach to teaching, which is more liberal than the education systems of the countries from which many come. Students from very authoritarian educational backgrounds may be confused when confronted with lecturers whose opinion is not considered to be the final word, but rather the beginning of a discussion. Other principles of teaching are equally confusing—like the tutorial or seminar, which is very much based on co-operative learning, and the idea of taking an "intellectual risk" rather than simply avoiding error. The single textbook is far less significant here, more emphasis being placed on students' independent reading and research work, which involves mastering library and sometimes computing techniques.

Apart from the practical necessity of supervision, there is also the symbolic value it represents in the eyes of foreign students and this British lecturers often fail to recognize.

Thus the comparative lack of academic supervision can be one of the most serious drawbacks of the system to overseas students.

The discussion which followed showed that supervision is indeed a delicate aspect of postgraduate research work, which presents a paradox in requiring the student to do independent research, yet making him or her to a certain extent dependent on a supervisor. This situation is not helped by the fact that quite often there is no transition phase between undergraduate work, during which students are almost "spoon-fed", and postgraduate studies, when "suddenly you are expected to do everything on your own". This new status makes it a psychological necessity to have a supervisor to whom you can turn for help, even if he may be less of an expert at your special subject than you have become in the course of your research.

Supervision is a delicate aspect of postgraduate research work.

Many of the participants have had to come to terms with the fact that their courses are indeed very much British-based; one of the reasons for this may be that quite often there is little material available, even in the countries concerned, particularly in subjects which rely on up-to-date-surveys and statistics. However, tutors ought to know what statistical and other secondary material is available for their research students.

On the whole, the discussion gave a very satisfactory overall view of supervision in the sciences; many students feel encouraged by the personal interest their supervisors are taking in their progress and co-operate very successfully with tutors and other postgraduate students. Arts students seem to be less happy with the degree of co-operation they are getting.

Discussion Groups Report

The conference split up into five discussion groups which each met twice, considering:—

- *What advice they would give students coming to Britain from their home countries.*

Suggestions made included advice that prospective students should:—

- analyse prospectuses and courses well, noting the difference between a university and a polytechnic;
- be prepared to readjust assumptions made about academic structures and available resources;
- be ready for communication problems, both on the verbal and non-verbal level, and not hesitate to ask for clarification when necessary;
- come with an open mind. Be tolerant. The host culture's experience of foreign cultures is not as great as their own;
- not judge someone from another culture by their own cultural values until they have come to know that culture and its values first;
- try not to stay at an international residence for too long, but live with British people;
- take the initiative, introduce themselves, talk to people;
- know their own country, culture, history etc.;
- be prepared to cope with loneliness.

● *What practical changes could be made to make the start easier for overseas students.*

Among the ideas for improvements were:—

- information on what students must expect of Britain should be better balanced than it is now; some British Council information, for example, is too off-putting;
- women, in particular, ought to be better prepared for what their life will be like in Britain;
- proper supervision is needed on an academic and an emotional level. To achieve this, a liaison board of students and staff should be set up and an ombudsman position should be created. These posts should be endowed with more than merely recommendatory power.

Returning home

Rev Robert Hughes chaired a panel of five students who talked about what they expected to experience on returning home.

Aloysios Nyakarwana anticipated problems on both a personal and professional level. "Bureaucracy likes the status quo", which is to say that bureaucratic colleagues will not welcome advice and new ideas, particularly from a young man. Also, the longer you stay here, the more you will get out of touch with developments at home. On a more personal level, there is the difficulty of wanting to share your overseas experience, even though this might make you look as though you were "posing".

Politically, there might be problems; however, Aloysius's home country, Uganda, does look fairly stable at present.

The most important personal benefits consist of the acquisition of international knowledge and experience, personal experiences of a variety of everyday life situations, which could be subsumed under the heading of "Applied Social Science", and of learning to be democratic—in the approach to study, for example. His time in Britain has given him self-confidence and motivation to learn more: "The sky is the limit."

Lasting memories will be of people he liked, lecturers, and fellow-students, and of how to get to know people and form impressions of them according to papers they read, music they listen to, and TV programmes they watch. He also will remember the unobtrusive charity of British people.

The problems of students returning to the Lebanon will be minor in comparison with the major problems currently facing his country, thought **Salaam Harb**. After six years in Turkey and two years in Britain he considers himself well-practised in adjusting to new situations, hence also well-prepared for adjusting to life back home.

He regrets that the very advanced skills and knowledge in Mechanical Engineering which he acquired abroad are not what Lebanon needs right now, which are those which can contribute to the development of agriculture and the economy.

Personal benefits were also the experience of democracy and freedom, and a newly found self-confidence, not only on a personal, but also on a national basis—"We could do all this if only we had the resources." He will remember the friendly atmosphere on the campus and the fact that personally he never encountered any racial prejudice.

As a German, **Christine Schmidt** found that Britain has helped her to develop a European identity, and returning home will present no major problems. She will miss the quality of life which she found in Britain; but on the other hand she will be relieved to return to an easier communication between men and women.

Her stay in Britain helped her to gain a greater awareness of historical and political matters; it has also made her appreciate friends and family more. In academic life, she is most impressed with the easy-going atmosphere at college and with the fact that London has to offer so many experts, who are always willing to help.

Shuanghua Xia focussed his talk on the culture shock he expects to experience—a kind of reverse of the one he had on coming to Britain. He will have to tone down the sense of competition he had to acquire here, as to Chinese people friendship comes first, competition second, and the Western spirit of "Go for Gold!" is foreign to them.

The economic principles he encountered in Britain are a valuable experience to him personally, but cannot be applied to the situation in China, which is a very poor country and where the effects of privatization would be less desirable than they are here.

Among his lasting impressions are people's friendliness and charity, and the fact that lecturers do not flaunt their superiority, but are willing to spend a long time talking to students.

For **Sara Zaman** of Singapore, Britain is the third country (in the third continent) in which she has studied, and she has come to accept that you face similar problems in every new country and, with time, learn to cope with them.

Her lifestyle and work in Singapore is going to be very similar to the one here, as the country has "adapted and adopted what the U.K. has slogged to achieve over centuries": one of the main points of sending students to developed countries is indeed to speed development by benefiting from their experience.

She has benefited from learning about British history, society, and culture, comparing them to her own and so learning more about them. The true value of these experiences cannot really be assessed until one has left the country and some time has passed. Bad times will be forgotten, the good ones will be remembered. She will miss friends and opportunities particular to London like good opera and ballet.

The discussion focused on democracy in the practical aspects of the British education system. While most people agreed that tutors are indeed approachable and willing to help, in some cases there was a barrier between those teaching and those taught, as in the case of postgraduate access to the senior common room. The impression of charity was confirmed in the discussion, and consideration for the disabled was mentioned as a remarkable feature of British life.

Readjustment to life at home is a highly individual process.

Some thought was given to the question whether overseas students should be given more help to prepare for their return to their home countries, but this is likely to be difficult, as readjustment to life at home is a highly individual process of self-realization and will take a different course for every single person.

Looking to the future

Dr Alastair Niven first considered overseas students' reasons for coming to Britain. Although the list is partly based on personal observations and talks with students, it is substantiated by the findings of a Tracer Study which he undertook for the Association of Commonwealth Universities (ACU), considering over 10,000 Commonwealth Scholars who had held the award since 1960. The main reasons are (in order of priority):—

- academic reasons; a desirable course is offered here;
- financial reasons: money is available for a course here;
- the general reputation of British higher education;
- democracy in Britain;
- landscape, culture, history, and general ambience of Britain.

He went on to qualify these, noting that whereas the last is in one sense static, in the case of the others changes were taking place. Taking the points in order, he noted:—

- Academic supervision often suffers from the absence of university teachers during the vacation and over weekends, and while it is acknowledged that they have research to do when they are not teaching, they should still feel a sense of obligation towards the students. In addition, overseas postgraduate students sometimes complain that courses on offer are inappropriate to their needs.

- As fees have gone up, the profile of countries of origin is changing; students from rich countries are getting more and more priority whilst prospective students from the poorer countries cannot afford to study in Britain. During a recent visit to India Dr Niven found the picture has changed dramatically even over the past two years, and first class postgraduate students cannot now find the money to come to this country.

- The reputation of British higher education is perhaps in some areas no longer as well deserved as it was. Some aspects of the British higher education system still provide the example for the world, but as money dries up and people go abroad (some chairs cannot easily be filled now as people of the best calibre leave the country), as research facilities decline, how much longer will that remain true?

- Democracy may be part of academic life, but elsewhere in Britain it is not, despite protestations, at the top of the Government's agenda; in the view of many people democracy in Britain is being subtly eroded, clear evidence of this being the abolition of the metropolitan councils and the curtailment of some individual liberties. These trends are noted abroad and are having an effect upon marketing campaigns to recruit overseas students.

British higher education is in a state of flux.

Institutions try to face up to the changing situation, but the thrust is towards building up numbers and raising funds rather than imaginative thinking about overseas students, i.e. making it as easy as possible for them to adjust to life in Britain.

There are various ways to help international students to integrate. One possibility is to establish either a peer-pairing system or a less formal arrangement to set up welcoming facilities. Another way is being tried out in Canada, where students provide consultancy services for industry, giving advice on the basic facts of their home countries to individual firms. Finally, alumni networks could provide a real practical resource to encourage the next generation to come here.

British higher education is in a state of flux, so forecasts are very difficult, but it is safe to say that in ten years' time the status of many institutions in this country will not be what it is now. A tiered system is going to be established within the universities and possibly within the polytechnics, creating a difference between elite and less advantaged universities comparable to the difference between an Ivy League university and a small liberal arts college in the USA. The governing bodies of the universities, including some of the prestigious ones, have by now become dependent on high overseas students' fees, so they are not likely to demand a fall in income from those sources.

There is some justification for the hope that institutions will continue to offer good facilities and arrangements, not only out of a sense of moral responsibility, but also because of the international competition for students.

Despite the problems mentioned, there are reasons for optimism. The recognition of overseas students' needs, as well as their overall significance for Britain, is much greater now than it was ten years ago, and an encouraging number of auxiliary institutions are being set up to assist overseas students. There is also a genuine willingness to welcome overseas students, even though people may be a little helpless as to how to set about it.

There are reasons for optimism.

Better use could be made of those such as former VSO workers who would like to stay in touch with people coming from their former host countries and are familiar enough with their background to help in a specific way.

During the final discussion the question of help for overseas students in financial difficulties was raised, with fairly pessimistic conclusions. There are educational trusts for individual national groupings, but limited funds are shared between both overseas students and immigrants.

It was pointed out that the "Educational Grants Advisory Service", c/o The Family Welfare Organisation, 501/505 Kingsland Road, London E8 4AU, acts as a contact point and is able to match applicants with the appropriate organisation.

Regrettably, however, the general advice must be not to come here unless the funding of the entire course is secured beforehand, as there are very few sources for help later on.

One word of warning concerned the general deterioration of the financial situation both of home and overseas students, and the possibility of a backlash on the part of home students if some kind of positive discrimination in favour of overseas students was perceived to be taking place.

Conference report by Christa Veile

PARTICIPANTS

The following took part in the conference:—
Simon Adebo, Ethiopia (Rural Development Planning, University of East Anglia); **Ali**, Iran (Civil Engineering, University College London); **Sami Bahri**, Lebanon (Molecular Biology, University College London); **Harihar Bhattacharya**, India (Economics, London School of Economics); **Xiaoqi Chen**, Republic of China (Electrical Engineering, Liverpool University); **Esau del Carpio**, Peru (Electrical Engineering, UMIST); **Omar Diakite**, Guinea (Applied Economics, North East London Polytechnic); **Laura Donohue**, USA (English Literature, University of East Anglia); **Bibian Ekoh**, Nigeria (Sociology, Bradford University); **Dr Keith Fenwick**, Dean of Studies, Christ Church College, Canterbury; **Jean Fenwick**, Deputy Head of Clarendon House Girls' Grammar School, Ramsgate; **Carlos Ferreira**, Brazil (Mechanical Engineering, UMIST); **Isolda Ferreira**, Brazil (Environmental Biology, UMIST); **Mahmoud Haggag**, Egypt (Civic Design, Liverpool University); **Salaam Harb**, Lebanon (Mechanical Engineering, UMIST); **Taroon Hira**, Kenya (Finance and Accounting, Salford University); **Rev. Robert Hughes**, Director of a Housing Study commissioned by the Overseas Students Trust; **Chris Jones**, Canada (Government, London School of Economics); **Judith Jones**, Trinidad (Law, Jesus College, Cambridge); **Tom Joyce**, Australia (Government, Law, London School of Economics); **Twaha Kaawaase-Mujjumbula**, Uganda (Development Finance, Birmingham University); **Martin Kenyon**, Director, Overseas Students Trust; **Peter Kibuchi**, Kenya (Development and Finance, Birmingham University); **Gail Larose**, Canada, Head of Higher Educatjon Unit, Commonwealth Secretariat; **Xiaoping Li**, Republic of China (Television Research, Leeds University); **Zhuang Li**, Republic of China (Computer Studies, UMIST); **Iain Lynch**, Senior Tutor, St Catharine's Foundation; **Aref Makooi**, Iran (Library and Information Studies, University College London); **Valerie Martin**, Deputy Warden, William Goodenough Hall, London; **Andy Masheter**, Director, United Kingdom Council for Overseas Student Affairs (UKCOSA); **Antonio Meija**, Columbia (Electrical Engineering, UMIST); **Stephen Mellor**, Department of Education and Science; **Ajar Mohd Mohamed**, Malaysia (Community Studies, London University); **Hena Mukherjee**, Malaya, Chief Project Officer, Commonwealth Secretariat; **Mark Molenga**, Zambia (Geography, King's College London); **Manuela Myers-Fedoraka**, Canada (English Literature, University College London); **Samson Madera Nashon**, Kenya (Mathematics and Education, University of Leeds); **Yoko Nishihara**, Japan (Sculpture, Central School of Art and Design, London Institute); **Dr Alastair Niven**, Literature Director, Arts Council; **Nurdayadi**, Indonesia (Finance and Accounting, Birmingham University); **Aloysius Nyakarwana**, Uganda (Finance and Accounting, Birmingham University); **Professor Bhikhu C. Parekh**, Deputy Chairman, Commission of Racial Equality and Professor of Political Science, Hull University; **Pauline Perry**, Director, South Bank Polytechnic, London; **Dr Celia Phillips**, Dean of Undergraduate Students, London School of Economics; **Prodouturu Prabhakar**, India (Marine Chemistry, Liverpool University); **Nazar Ullah Raja**, Pakistan (Microbiology, University College London); **Somaskanthamoorthy Ravirasa**, Sri Lanka (Structural Engineering, University of Bradford); **Michael Sargent**, Director, Overseas Students Services, British Council; **Pru Scarlett**, Director, Public Affairs Department, Royal Commonwealth Society; **Christine Schmidt**, West Germany (Art and Design, Central School of Art and Design, London Institute); **Kate Slack**, Drama Teacher; **Tim Slack**, Principal, St Catharine's Foundation; **Barbara Smith**, Overseas Student Welfare Officer, British Council; **Ahmed Mofid Subuh**, Syria (Biochemistry of Nutrition, Liverpool University); **Natsuko Tamba**, Japan (Ceramics, Cardiff); **Nathan Tembo**, Zambia (Mathematics, Leeds University); **Dr Tut Thain**, Burma (Oral Medicine, University of Manchester); **Christa Veile**, Student Co-ordinator, St Catharine's Foundation; **Roswitha Wagenknecht**, West Germany (English Literature, University of Kent); **Dr Geoffrey Williams**, Director of Studies, St Catharine's Foundation; **Peter Williams**, Director, Education Programme, Commonwealth Secretariat; **Shuanghua Xia**, Republic of China (Artificial Intelligence, UMIST); **Lizhong Yu**, Republic of China (Geography, University of Liverpool); **Sara Zaman**, Singapore (Molecular Biology, University College London).

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